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Monday, November 27, 2017 metro.us | t: MetroNewYork York

CYBER MONDAY

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Solving the hunger problem in our schools. 22

Jets fall apart in fourth quarter again. 23

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THE VOICE OF THE TREE

Metro's exclusive chat with Matt Haze, the comedian behind the Rockefeller Christmas tree's unofficial alter ego, reveals what the tree thinks of you. 4

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WELCOME TO METRO.US

NIKKI M. MASCALI, REPORTER

Ahead of Wednesday's Rockefeller Center Christmas tree lighting, I interviewed Matt Haze, the man behind the @30RockTree parody Twitter account, who opens up about his alter ego's feelings on moving to the big city, selfies and how he really feels about the Times Square ball. Check it out inside or at **metro.us.**

FIGHT OVER US CONSUMER FINANCE AGENCY

The White House's plan to appoint an interim leader for the top U.S. regulator for consumer finance came under further scrutiny on Sunday as a senior Democratic senator said the move would violate the Dodd-Frank Wall Street reform law. Richard Cordray, a Democrat, stepped down on Friday as director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, which was created after the financial crisis to protect consumers from abusive lending practices. He named Leandra English, the agency's chief of staff, as deputy director and said she would take over as acting director. President Donald Trump then named White House budget director Mick Mulvaney, one of the CFPB's fiercest critics, to the position. On Saturday, the Justice Department said in a memo that the White House was right to name an interim CFPB director.

WEEKEND ONLINE SALES CLIMB TO RECORD HIGH

Black Friday and Thanksgiving online sales in the United States surged to record highs as shoppers bagged deep discounts and bought more on their mobile devices, heralding a promising start to the key holiday season, according to retail analytics firms. U.S. retailers raked in a record $7.9 billion in online sales on Black Friday and Thanksgiving, up 17.9 percent from a year ago, according to Adobe Analytics, which measures transactions at the largest 100 U.S. web retailers. Adobe said Cyber Monday is expected to drive $6.6 billion in internet sales, which would make it the largest U.S. online shopping day in history. In the run-up to the holiday weekend, traditional retailers invested heavily in improving their websites and bulking up delivery options, preempting a decline in visits to brick-and-mortar stores.

GETTY IMAGES

5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

JUNIOR RANGER

3 Kevin Shattenkirk of the New York Rangers greets a Junior Ranger player on the blue line for the national anthem during Kids Day before Sunday's game against the Vancouver Canucks at Madison Square Garden.

ISIS RAISES STAKES WITH EGYPT MOSQUE ATTACK

4 The mosque was packed with hundreds of worshippers for Friday prayers in Egypt's North Sinai when gunmen in military-style uniforms and masks appeared in a doorway and at windows. The ease with which they mounted an attack — killing more than 300 people in the worst bloodshed of its kind in Egypt's modern history — highlighted the threat militant groups pose in the most populous Arab country. After four years of battling Islamic State in the Sinai, where the group has killed hundreds of soldiers and police,authorities still face an enemy with growing ambitions in Egypt, despite its defeats in Iraq, Syria and Libya. Carrying the black flag of Islamic State, the assailants arrived in off-road vehicles before opening fire on the cream-colored Al Rawdah mosque in Bir al-Abed, leaving its carpets stained with blood, officials and witnesses said.

CUBA HOLDS MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

5 Cuba took another step on Sunday toward the end of the Castro era, with millions of residents placing paper ballots in cardboard boxes for ward delegates to municipal assemblies. The vote comes the day after the first anniversary of revolutionary leader Fidel Castro's death and precedes another election early next year for provincial and national assembly deputies. The new national assembly, where 50 percent of the deputies must be ward delegates elected on Sunday, is expected on Feb. 24 to select a new president to replace Raul Castro, Fidel's 86-year-old younger brother, who has said he will step down after serving two five-year terms. The Castro brothers have headed the government since the 1959 revolution. Raul Castro will remain head of the Communist Party until 2021, the only legal party in Cuba.

TONY'S METRO MAGIC 2017

As we enter the season of giving, Metro asks that you donate to Tony's Metro Magic annual holiday toy drive to help underprivileged children in your community. You can donate by visiting metro.us/magic, clicking on the toy wish-list link of your choice, and ordering via a secure payment system. Toys will then be distributed to local children in need.

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7 Questions for the (unofficial) Rockefeller Center Christmas tree

@30RockTree opens up about moving to the big city, tree selfies and how he really feels about the Times Square ball.

NIKKI M. MASCALI
@MetroNewYork
nikki.mascali@metro.us

People the world over have aspirations of moving to New York City and taking it by storm to become a star, but perhaps no star shines brighter, at least for a few weeks every year, than the tree at Rockefeller Center.

For more than 80 years, the tree has been a major holiday symbol across the globe, and with millions slated to watch the annual Rockefeller Center Christmas tree lighting in person and at home Wednesday, Metro wanted to go behind the scenes a bit.

We spoke to Matt Haze, the comedian and entertainer who has been the alter ego of @30RockTree on Twitter for the past seven years.

"I can't believe it's been that long at this point," Haze said of the account he started in 2010, just as parody Twitter accounts started popping up.

Haze's voice as the tree has evolved over the years, but one constant remains: Rockefeller Center has never really acknowledged @30RockTree.

"I never had any grief from Rockefeller Center, which is owned by Tishman Speyer, so I've never tried to cross any levels or boundaries," he said. "They let me play, but they've never said anything."

While Rockefeller Center did not respond to Metro's request for comment about @30RockTree, the 75-foot-tall Norway spruce from State College, Pennsylvania, did agree to give us his first-ever interview, probably because "I'm just standing here doing nothing," he said.

Matt Haze has been the man behind @30RockTree, the unofficial Twitter account of arguably the world's most famous Christmas tree. GETTY IMAGES, PROVIDED

What was your reaction when you were State College's chosen tree?
I realized I was going to be able to get out of there and actually be able to have a life and not stare at the same cars driving by me every single day. It was great!

What do you miss about back home?
I miss the peace and quiet, but I love the attention.

So you're loving the crowds so far?
I get annoyed because how many selfies do you need to take in one sitting? Take one and move on! There's only so much I can give. I need my me time.

Inquiring minds want to know what you do after hours.
I'm people watching still, constantly totally keeping an eye on who's going by and keeping those stories for my tell-all book someday.

What's been your favorite celebrity encounter over the years?
Mariah Carey, I think she has a thing for me. She always shows up to sing that one song over and over again. I assume it's me and not because she's getting paid to use it.

Be honest: Is there competition between you and the Times Square ball?
I think he's like an annoying little brother that thinks he's the star of the season, but he's a star for about one minute at the end of the year.

You kindly donate yourself to Habitat for Humanity after the holidays, but what is your dream retirement?
I want my trunk on a beach with part of it laying in the water so I can feel the waves crashing on me.

Matt Haze, the voice behind @30RockTree, will be traveling the world next year hosting and producing a new web video series. Visit matthaze.com for more info.

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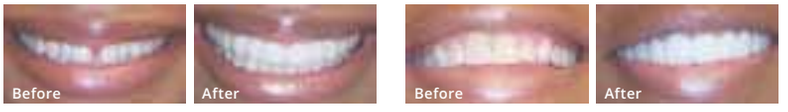

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Yes, Virginia, you need an appointment to see Santa at Macy's this year

For years, kids (and adults) of all ages have looked forward to telling their Christmas wishes to Santa at Macy's Santaland. But starting Monday, they'll need to make a reservation to see Jolly Old Saint Nick on the eighth floor.

Yes, Virginia, you'll need an appointment to have a lap-top audience with Santa Claus.

"Santa's a popular guy, so the wait times to meet him have been quite long in previous years, especially on our busiest days," Macy's wrote on its Santaland website. "The new reservation system is designed to minimize this by scheduling visitors to join the line at a time of your choice, allowing for the best possible holiday experience."

For the first time, Macy's is requiring reservations for Santaland.
GETTY IMAGES

The company dubbed this new reservation system "Express Pass 2.0," which initially allowed visitors to make online reservations for shorter wait times, though it did bypass part of the attraction. With the new reservation system, all guests will be able to experience the full glory of Santaland.

The reservations are free to make, and visitors can choose pre-selected time slots from 30 minutes to five days in advance. They are encouraged to arrive and check in with one of Santa's elves within their chosen time slots to ensure that the big guy stays on schedule for all the other good kids and adults. If you, however, miss your scheduled appointment, you will need to rebook for another time.

While guests can purchase professional photos with Santa via packages that start at $20.99, those purchases are not required to go through the attraction.

To make your Macy's Santaland reservation, visit macys.com/santaland. NIKKI M. MASCALI

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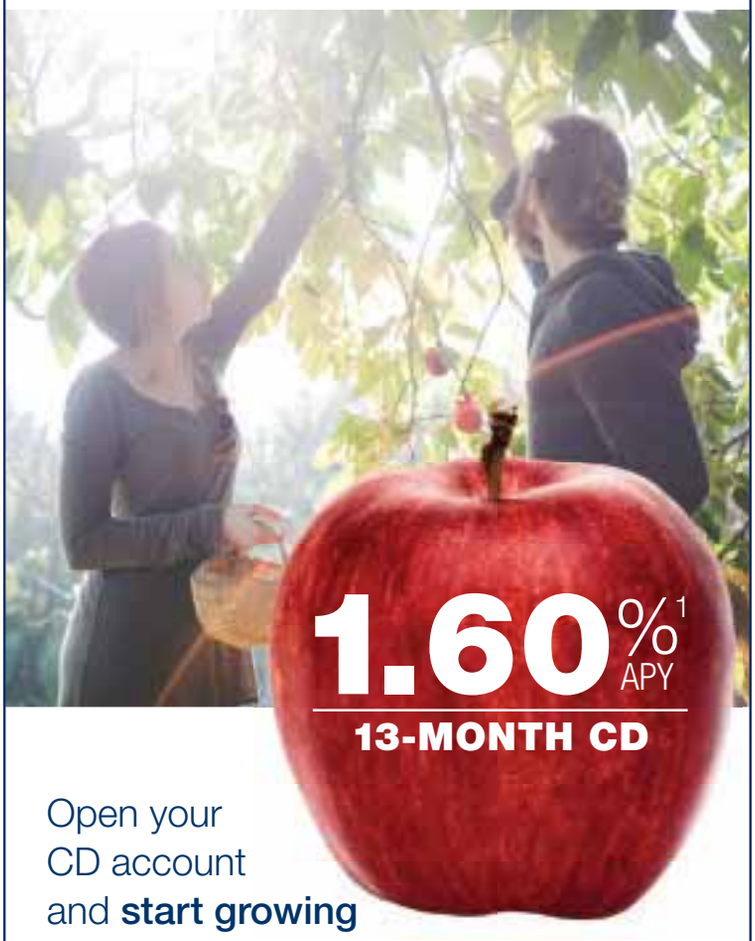

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The Girl Scouts want to remind us: No one is owed a hug, even if they're family

Why the holidays can be a great way to teach children about consent.

MEAGAN MORRIS
@MetroNewYork
letters@metro.us

As adults, we teach our children to avoid strangers and not let anyone touch them in their private areas. It's absolutely an important lesson to learn, but then we turn around and tell — or force — these same children to give physical affection to family and friends, even if they don't want to.

This sort of directive — like "give Aunt Shirley a hug!" — can be totally innocent, but advocates contend that it's giving children the wrong idea about what they allow others to do to their bodies.

The Girl Scouts are now reminding us about this mixed message in a recent blog post, adding that no one is "owed" a hug — not family, not anyone.

"Think of it this way, telling your child that she owes someone a hug either just because she hasn't seen this person in a while or because they gave her a gift can set the stage for her questioning whether she 'owes' another person any type of physical affection when they've bought her dinner or done something else seemingly nice for her later in life," the Girl Scouts writes in the post.

It's an important thing to be aware of, especially with all the recent attention on sexual harassment and assault in Hollywood and beyond. Children aren't too young to pick up on these cues, either.

"The notion of consent may seem very grown-up and like something that doesn't pertain to children," Girl Scouts' developmental psychologist Dr. Andrea Bastiani Archibald told the blog. "But the lessons girls learn when they're young about setting physical boundaries and expecting them to be respected last a lifetime, and can influence how she feels about herself and her body as she gets older."

And teaching children about consent, boundaries, and choices can possibly help them make better decisions about what they will — and won't — allow people to do.

"We know that some adults prey on children, and teaching your daughter about consent early on can help her understand her rights, know when lines are being crossed, and when to go to you for help."

The Girl Scouts adds that the upcoming holidays as an opportunity to teach your children that they can choose how to greet others, not the other way around.

Saying how much she's missed someone or thank you with a smile, a high-five, or even an air kiss are all ways she can express herself, and it's important that she knows she gets to choose which feels most comfortable to her.

The Girl Scouts organization is speaking out about forcing children to give physical affection to family and friends. GETTY IMAGES

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DEMOCRATIC HARASSERS, REPUBLICAN PERVERTS AND THE SELF-CONFESSED GROPER-IN-CHIEF

Rep. John Conyers is the most recent politician to be publicly accused of sexual misconduct. GETTY IMAGES

ANALYSIS

ELLIS HENICAN
@henican

At last, we have found it: the final gasp of bipartisanship in Donald Trump's Washington.

Out-of-control horniness doesn't lean left, and it doesn't lean right. It springs from red states and from blue. Democratic harassers and Republican perverts march arm-in-arm together on a jam-packed walk of shame.

John Conyers is only the latest to be accused. On Sunday, the veteran Democratic congressman, age 88½, was pressured into stepping down as ranking member of the House Judiciary Committee. "I very much look forward to vindicating myself and my family," the mustachioed Michigander insisted as Nancy Pelosi bum-rushed him out of the oak-paneled committee room, and no one gave his denials any credence at all.

But Republicans had better not gloat. For every geezerly groper with a D by his name, there's one with an R. That's the balance of libido in Washington these days. Haven't the R's spent the past month explaining George H.W. Bush? Now 93, the wheelchair-bound ex-president has been on a multiyear, butt-squeezing tour across America, cracking one of the worst jokes that's ever told: "Do you know who my favorite magician is? David Cop-a-Feel."

Ugh! Is that Bush's senility talking? Could one of Conyers' famous backrubs calm everybody down? Maybe and no. But this much is for sure: From Washington to Hollywood and back again, they're lining up in pairs like nothing since Noah's Ark.

Roger Ailes and Harvey Weinstein.

Bill O'Reilly and Charlie Rose.

Al Franken and Joe Barton.

Kevin Spacey and Louis CK.

Sunday, you had to add Richard Branson. No doubt he'll have a partner by Tuesday.

Okay, Roy Moore still stands alone in his particular perversity. The Ten Commandments judge now running for the U.S. Senate in Alabama is the only grown man (so far) accused of dating teenage girls. But even in that stinky quarter, the finger-waggers had better beware. At this particular moment in her-story, no man stands alone for long.

Just ask Donald Trump. It seemed he'd gotten away with his "Access Hollywood" boasting, caught on Billy Bush's videotape. That was a year and a half ago. "When you're a star, they let you do it," he said. "You can do anything."

Metro columnist Ellis Henican is the best-selling author of a dozen books, including "TRUMPITUDE: The Secret Confessions of Donald's Brain," which hits stores tomorrow via Post Hill Press. trumpitude.us.

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Baby Boomers Benefitting From Knee Arthritis Tr

How Cutting-Edge Treatments and Technology Are Helping Knee Arthritis Sufferers A

New York City - Nothing is more true. A life with constant pain is not a life worth living. And if you can't stay active and do all the things you love - like walking, playing golf, tennis, vacationing etc. It's not really a life at all.

...the Pain Is More Like A Prison

And for generations, knee arthritis has given good, hard working people a life sentence of pain and suffering. To make things worse, slick marketers only add to the pain by promising wonder cures. Late night television and your mail box are filled with "wonder arthritis cures" that make wild claims and sound too good to be true . . . ***Because They Are***

Nothing is worse than getting your hopes up - spending your hard earned money - only to be let down time after time.

It is easy to give up...

But while marketers were peddling "wonder cures," real doctors and researchers were hard at work trying to discover a real medical solution. Modern medicine eradicated small pox and polio. Through laser eye surgery, doctors can give almost blind people perfect 20/20 vision. The potential cures on the horizon with breakthroughs like stem cell and regenerative therapies are endless.

Solve The Riddle Of Arthritis Pain?

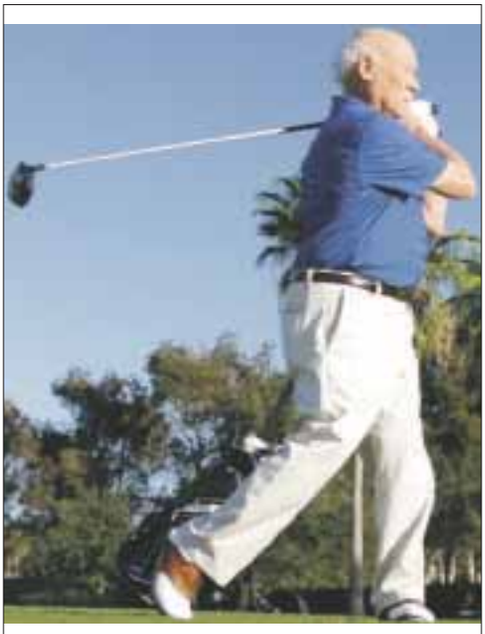
For the past 3 years, that's exactly what a medical clinic in New York City has been doing. The ***NYC Pain MD*** doctors have been able to help thousands of knee arthritis sufferers with cutting-edge treatments and technology older generations could only dream about. One of these treatments in particular has helped thousands of patents ease or eliminate pain and go back to doing their favorite activities like: walking, playing golf, tennis and many more. The treatment is called viscosupplementation. *But wait.* This is NOT the typical viscosupplementation. So if you are one of the many knee arthritis sufferers who already had viscosupplementation and did not get great results - what you are about to discover should be very important. to you in particular. It might even get you out of pain.

Here is why: During viscosupplementation, a special lubricating gel is put directly into your arthritic knee joint. This not only helps the knee joint to glide more smoothly, it acts as a cushion, protects the joint. and relieves a lot of pain. This is often referred to as "joint oil." In many cases, when done properly, this can dramatically lessen knee pain for up to 6 months and much longer in many cases.

And even better - if this treatment works for you the first time - it can be safely repeated when necessary and the results are often better for some.

Like Threading A Needle?

The key to this treatment being successful is actually getting the special lubricating gel directly into the joint where it can go to work. That's why the doctors at ***NYC Pain MD*** use very advanced digital imaging that allows them to see directly into the joint and make sure the lubricating gel "hits the spot" and the treatment has the best odds for success. Studies show that doctors doing these types of procedures without this special imaging actually miss the joint space up to one third of the time!



"I've had trouble with my knee walking. I'm a golfer and want to play golf but I couldn't. I made the call and went and it's the best thing I ever did. It's just – now I can play golf, I can walk, I can climb stairs, I can do things I did many years ago".

"It's the smartest thing ever did" "Since I've been going for the treatment for my knees I don't' take any pills, I take not over the counter medication.."

"This a good alternative to surgery." "I am so glad I went. I'm so confident I feel so good about it and I recommend It to everybody." William La Spina . Golf Enthusiast

(While ***NYC Pain MD*** cannot say all patients will respond like this we can say they are possible. Every patient is individual and results will vary. patient to patient.)

Why Treatment Can Fail

This is why viscosupplmentation can fail for some people. It is also why many knee arthritis sufferers come to ***NYC Pain MD*** after failed treatments elsewhere... and are finally able to get relief. It is not uncommon for patients to travel hours for the advanced treatments given at ***NYC Pain MD***.

Patients Should Be Assured About Prescsion Treatments

ONE BIG MISTAKE we have heard about is to use digital imaging or ultra-sound to mark the knee and then shut off the imagining and then not use it during the treatment procedure.!!! **This means the doctor did not actually see if the lubricating gel went exactly where it was intended.** The only way to know for sure if the procedure was as accurate as possible - and the lubricating gel went precisely into the joint space - is to use the digital imaging **during the entire procedure.** *You can actually see the lubricating gel as it goes where it in needed.* **If you did not actually see it on the digital imaging screen - you do not know for sure if you actually got the proper treatment.**

If you are going to have this treatment, make sure you ask your doctor if special digital imagining is used THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE PROCEDURE. Not just in the beginning. If you have already had this procedure without this advanced imaging... Or if it was only used in the beginning... There is a good chance you did not get the results you could and should have.

"Clearly, technology is only as good as the doctors using it ... and clearly experience matters"

That's why, if you need heart surgery, you go to a heart surgeon... Not a general practitioner. At ***NYC Pain MD*** you will be seen by doctors who are specially trained in this procedure... Do it every day... and see thousands of patients every year. The latest technology combined with experienced and skilled doctors gets the best results possible.

Who Is This Treatment For?

This treatment is not for everyone. But it is for a lot of people who suffer with knee arthritis. Especially if you would like to avoid total knee replacement surgery and possible lessen or eliminate your pain. This treatment

reatments Their Parents Could Only Dream About

void Knee Replacement Surgery and Stay Active Into Their 50's, 60's, 70s and even 80s

may help you if you have knee pain due to arthritis. It may also help you if you do not have dramatic visible signs of arthritis on x-ray. Studies show that arthritis is present long before it can be seen on x-ray. In fact, the sooner you start this treatment the better. So, if you have knee pain - seeing one of the specially trained medical doctors at ***NYC Pain MD*** could be the answer you are looking for. **<u>This is important</u> - this is especially for you if you have had viscosupplmentation in the past without good results.**

Many patients who did not have good results elsewhere are often able get very favorable results because of the advanced technology and procdure experience at ***NYC Pain MD***. In fact, ome patients have decided to cancel knee surgery and others go back to the active life-style they had before it was stolen by all the pain.

How To Find Out If The Experts At *NYC Pain MD* Can Help You

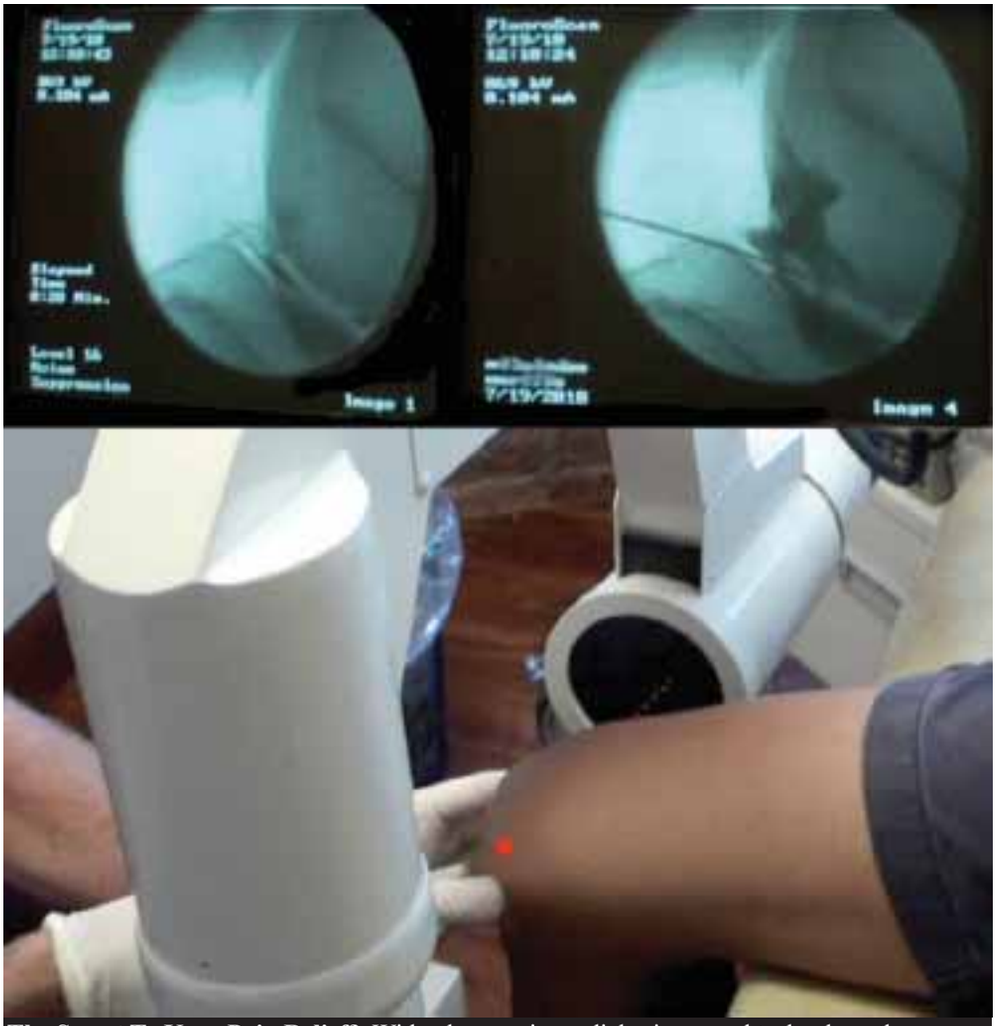
If you have knee arthritis pain and would like to see if this treatment might help you - the experts at ***NYC Pain MD*** offer a complimentary screening appointment.

This screening will help determine if you are a candidate for treatment and also gives you a chance to get your questions answered.

If you are a candidate, you will leave knowing that you found the possible way to lessen or even eliminate your knee pain for 6 months or more.

There is no obligation and if you are not a candidate - the doctor will help you find the best doctors and treatments for your individual case.

To set up a complimentary screening , just call 800-741-5340. But if you want a screening, we recommend calling right now. Due to time limitations, the center can only offer a limited number of screening per month. They decided to limit the number because they believe in giving every patents the individual time they deserve. If you have ever been to a doctors office and been rushed or treated like a number - ***NYC Pain MD*** is different. We would consider this like a "throwback" to the old days of medicine. Before the days when HMO's and insurance companies (and now Obamacare) turned medicine into a business only and made it so difficult to care for patients the best way possible. If you are looking for a state-of-the-art medical clinic with "old school" ethics and values and treats patients like the good 'ole days... then ***NYC Pain MD*** may be just what you've been looking for. Just call 800-741-5340 and secure your no obligation screening before someone else gets your spot. The risk is nothing. The potential is getting your pain-free life back.



The Secret To Knee Pain Relief? With advances in medial science and technology the doctors at ***NYC Pain MD*** have been able to help thousands relieve their pain and get their active lifestyle back.

How To Get A No-Cost Screening & Find Out If This Knee Arthritis Treatment Is For You

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Feeling aggressive or a little emotional? Blame it on the alcohol

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Alcohol can have an impact on our physical health — you know, "beer before liquor, never been sicker" — but what about our emotions?

Sure, we all have that friend who gets way too chatty after a few drinks, but do those emotions depend differ on the types of alcohol we drink? Yes, according to a new study from the Public Health Wales NHS Trust.

For the study, published in the journal BMJ Open, the conducted an online survey of anonymous people between 18 and 34 years old from 21 different countries who had consumed alcohol in the previous year. The questions focused on the type of alcohol the respondents imbibed in during that time.

The results? Most people — about 53 percent — said that kicking back with a glass of red wine or a few beers helped them feel relaxed.

Just over 59 percent of those surveyed said they felt most confident after drinking spirits, followed by energy (at 58 percent) and sexiness (just over 42 percent). However, those spirits were more likely to cause feelings of sadness, aggression and illness.

Overall, women were more likely to feel emotional while drinking, while men landed more on the aggressive end.

Where you drink can influence emotions, too.

Taking a shot of vodka or sipping a glass of wine can have a much different effect on our emotions depending on where we're drinking. The researchers found that drinking at home was more likely to create a relaxing or tired feeling, but those who indulged in a few drinks while out were more likely to experience other emotions (like confidence, sexiness and aggression).

The information is important, researchers say, because people should have an understanding of how drinking makes them feel before choosing their drinks. MEAGAN MORRIS

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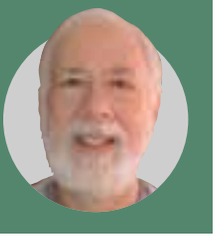
THE PROBLEMS WITH THE MTA FARE PAYMENT SYSTEM AND TECHNOLOGY PROJECTS

LARRY PENNER
Analysis
Larry Penner is a transportation historian and advocate who previously worked 31 years for the U.S. Department of Transportation.



Last year, the MTA issued a request for proposals for a new Fare Payment System. Funding of $419 million to support this project was included in the $32 billion MTA 2015-2019 five-year capital plan. This new fare collection system could be made through either smartphones, bank cards or MTA issued smart cards. In 2015, the proposed original project schedule called for testing in 2018, initiation of implementation in 2019 followed by substantial completion in 2021.

Two years later, both the budget and schedule appear to have been overly optimistic, just like other MTA NYC Transit new-technology projects. MTA awarding a contract for $573 million to Cubic Transportation Systems may not be the best use of these dollars. The new anticipated completion date has slipped two years to 2023. The budget went up by $154 million. Not a great start budget- or schedule-wise for this project. How will riders without smartphones accompanied with software such as Apple Pay, Android Pay, Samsung Pay or Pay with Google, debit cards or credit cards embedded with chips that rely on wireless technology known as near field communication use this new system? Not all students, seniors, poor and working-class riders have these options. Why will Cubic Transportation Systems open up a call center in Buffalo to support future customers using this new fare collection system with so many out of work NYC residents looking for employment?

The MTA should continue to be more transparent with its own board, elected officials, riders, taxpayers and transportation advocates on these and other capital procurements. The same is true for better oversight for third-party contractors, maintenance of schedule and project budgets.

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BIOTECHNOLOGY

Hardly anyone is eating enough vegetables, new CDC report says

Most Americans are not eating the right amount of veggies every day.

MEAGAN MORRIS
@MetroNewYork
letters@metro.us

Only 9 percent of Americans eat enough vegetables, according to a new study. GETTY IMAGES

An apple a day keeps the doctor away, but most of us wouldn't know because we're not eating them.

Only 12 percent of Americans are eating the recommended number of fruits a day, according to a new study from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. The number of us eating enough vegetables is even worse at 9 percent.

"The study confirms years of data demonstrating that Americans do not eat their veggies," Marion Nestle, professor of nutrition and food studies at New York University, told the Guardian. "Assuming this result is close to reality, it suggests the need for taking much stronger action to make it easier and cheaper to eat fruits and vegetables."

CDC took data from the 2015 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Systems and broke it down into different categories — like state, race and gender — and found that some subgroups of people consume even fewer of the amount of produce a day.

The study, which broke out groups of Americans by state, class, race and gender, found some subgroups were even less likely to eat enough produce. More women eat enough fruit than men: 15.1 percent to 9.2 percent of women. The same goes for wealthy vs. low income: Only 7 percent of poor people eat enough vegetables, while 11.4 percent of wealthy people do.

Where we live is also a factor, with 2.2 percent of people living in South Dakota eat the recommended amount of veggies. Alaskans consume the most vegetables, but that number is still low at only 12 percent of all residents.

Why Americans don't eat more fruits and vegetables

The reasons for why people aren't getting enough healthy stuff in their diets is as diverse as the U.S. in general. Some people simply don't like eating fruits or vegetables, while others don't have access to it. Approximately 13.5 million people live in food deserts, or areas with low access to fresh, healthy food (like fruits and vegetables), according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Improving that access is difficult because of factors like cost, availability of cheaper processed foods and available farmland. Only two percent of the farmland in the U.S. is dedicated to growing vegetables and fruit — a number that would need to double in order to grow the amount needed, according to the Union of Concerned Scientists.

"The food industry is not exactly working with public health on this, there's a multimillion-dollar industry working to get people to eat [processed foods]," the UCS' Sarah Reinhardt told the Guardian.

"Assuming this result is close to reality, it suggests the need for taking much stronger action to make it easier and cheaper to eat fruits and vegetables."

Marion Nestle

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In honor of these friendships, and so many others, we're celebrating exactly 16 celebrity friendships, from Leonardo DiCaprio and Tobey Maguire to Kate Hudson and Liv Tyler. **METRO**

ALL PHOTOS
GETTY IMAGES

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Florence Welch

Brad Pitt &
George Clooney

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Prepare for the 'Darkest Hour,' both for Winston Churchill and the fate of Europe

"Here's to not buggering it up!" — W.C.

GREGORY WAKEMAN
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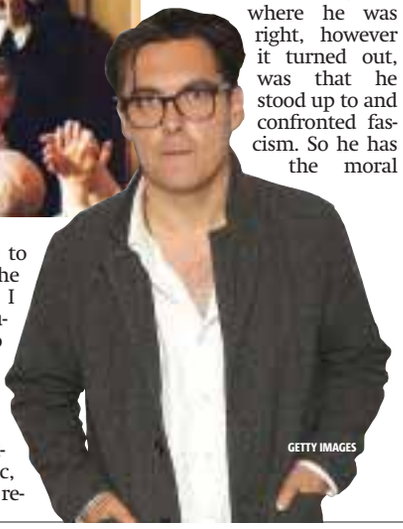
Gary Oldman as Britain's greatest prime minister. FOCUS FEATURES

We may feel as though we live in the most dramatic period of political history, but about 80 years ago the end of the world seemed nigh (well, at least a tad more "nigh" than "now"). No wonder dozens of movies have been made about the tensions at the time WWII was on Britain's doorstep, most recently "Dunkirk" and "The King's Speech." This time, however, we have the chance to focus on the formidable man at the helm — Winston Churchill.

The infamous British prime minister (played in "Darkest Hour" by Gary Oldman), took the chair in May 1940 and is remembered a little bit too fondly by modern day right-wingers, according to director Joe Wright. In this film, he tries to save Churchill from that legacy and portray him more as a pragmatist (who still had a few really bad ideas and prejudices).

"If we hadn't won ... if Hitler had turned right instead of left and wiped out the British forces on the beach of Dunkirk, and invaded, we would be vilifying Churchill for not having explored a possible peace process," says Wright on Churchill's luck. "History has vindicated Churchill, and he's regarded as a demigod because Britain actually went on to win the war. But I wanted audiences to meet the guy and try to see who the crazy, idiosyncratic, enigma really was."



GETTY IMAGES

Churchill's bravery during this period, when Britain was alone in Europe and under siege from the Nazis, makes for some riveting cinematography. "The point about Churchill, and where he was right, however it turned out, was that he stood up to and confronted fascism. So he has the moral authority on his side, and that can't be denied."

Time to erect a few more statues and throw him on the money, alongside the queen? Not quite.

"Churchill got a lot of things wrong," Wright says. "He had been in Parliament for a very long time, and during the course of that career he made some almighty blunders, including his position on women's suffrage, Indian independence and his catastrophic record in World War I (especially when he invaded the Dardanelles). But what we remember him for is the thing he got most right, which was his resistance to the wave of hate, intolerance, bigotry and fascism. And I think that helps to give 'Darkest Hour' an edge today."

"Darkest Hour" is out in select cinemas now, with a larger release in December.

Stick to your budget this holiday season! ISTOCK

NerdWallet's 2017 consumer holiday-shopping report

Some holiday shopping spending advice from our friends at NerdWallet.

NerdWallet is a personal finance website.

American holiday shoppers typically plan their buying a few months in advance. But even that preparation hasn't prevented a lump of debt from arriving at the end of the year.

According to NerdWallet's second Consumer Holiday Shopping Report, most American holiday shoppers plan their shopping ahead of time, but many put off making purchases until after the bargain-rich period spanning Thanksgiving, Black Friday, and Cyber Monday — and their wallets may suffer the consequences.

The report analyzes spending behavior and trends among millennials (ages 18-34), Gen Xers (35-54) and baby boomers (55 and older), and is based on a survey of more than 2,000 U.S. adults 18 and older commissioned by NerdWallet and conducted online by Harris Poll in October 2017. The report found that despite their good intentions, a higher percentage of Americans who shopped during the 2016 holiday season incurred debt than those who shopped during the 2015 holiday season.

Key findings Spending is expected to stay flat: Americans who will purchase holiday gifts during the 2017 holiday season plan to spend $660 on average, about the same as in 2016 ($657), and 60% of those who plan to purchase gifts in 2017 say they will spend the same as last year. More Americans are finding themselves in debt as a result of holiday gift purchases: 56% of those who shopped during the 2016 holiday season incurred credit card debt versus 48% of those who shopped during the 2015 holiday season. Baby boomers who plan to shop this holiday season plan to spend the most: They estimate their spending at $802 on average. Millennials and Gen Xers follow at $434 and $679, respectively. Budgets are often overlooked: More than a quarter of Americans (27%) who shopped during the 2016 holiday season did not have a budget, and 24% went over budget.

Americans prepare for months: On average, holiday shoppers typically start to plan their shopping 2½ months in advance. But they may be missing out on some of the shopping season's best sales: 47% of those who plan to purchase gifts say they'll do the majority of their shopping between Nov. 28 and Dec. 23, not on Thanksgiving, Black Friday or Cyber Monday. Most intend to mimic 2016 spending

An overwhelming majority of shoppers (85%) plan to purchase gifts for friends and loved ones between now and the end of 2017, and when it comes to spending money, most don't intend to deviate from last year — 60% of those who plan to purchase gifts during the 2017 holiday season say they will spend the same amount as they did in 2016 (anticipated spending of $660 on average this year versus $657 last holiday season).

Within that group, baby boomers plan to spend the most money on average at $802, which is 85% more than millennials ($434) and 18% more than Gen Xers ($679).

Millennials are far more likely (34%) to say they will spend more this year than last year compared with Gen Xers (15%) or baby boomers (13%). Still, as in 2016, millennials who plan on purchasing gifts in 2017 were more inclined to say they will spend less than $500 (63%), while 45% of Gen Xers and 46% of baby boomers said the same.

For more, make sure to check out the check out the full report over at NerdWallet.com.

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How to shop for Cyber Monday

Cyber Monday: Make some coffee and surf for online deals. ALL PHOTOS ISTOCK

Experts share tips on how to take advantage of Cyber Monday deals, the savings day that often takes a backseat to Black Friday madness.

KATE MOONEY
@yatinbrooklyn
kate.mooney@metro.us

After the chaos of Thanksgiving and Black Friday, it's easy to forget about Cyber Monday. The annual day of online-only deals, which falls on the Monday after Thanksgiving, is much more low-key than Black Friday, mainly because you can do everything from your couch or desk. We asked experts how to best take advantage of the savings.

Best shopping categories

Cyber Monday still provides plenty of opportunities to save a buck, especially when it comes to "softer goods" categories such as beauty, travel and apparel, says Lindsay Sakraida, director of content marketing at Deal News.

If you're still in the market for a winter coat or boots, haven't bought a ticket home for the holidays or are planning a late winter getaway, Monday could be a good day pull the trigger on these purchases. Sakraida notes that clothing brands tend to issue sitewide sales of up to 40 or 50 percent off.

When it comes to travel deals, hotels.com offers tons of discounted packages, and budget airlines like JetBlue and Southwest, or internationally, Norwegian and WOW Air, have been known to offer discounted flights on the holiday.

Strategies for deal hunters

While brands put out their Black Friday ads well in advance, Cyber Monday deals are more last minute. Instead, your best bet is to follow your favorite brands on social media and sign up for their email newsletters to hear about the deals as they're announced.

"There may be a special promotion for subscribers and the coupon code will be tied to specific email accounts," explains Sakraida.

Another difference is while some Black Friday deals prioritize the early bird, Cyber Monday deals don't really sell out — with the exception of airfare — so you can do your shopping any time on Monday when it's convenient for you.

Price checking is an essential money-saving technique, says Sara Skirboll, shopping and trends expert at coupon website RetailMeNot. She suggests using price comparison tools like Google Shopping or Nextag, which will point out the lowest price of an item online so you find the absolute best deal.

Shipping and returns

Be sure to note whether or not the company offers free shipping. If it doesn't, but the brand has a brick-and-mortar location, you might be able to pick up your items in store to save on shipping costs, Skirboll suggests.

Same goes for returns. "Opt to shop with a retailer who has a physical location nearby so you can return any merchandise you don't like in person to dodge return fees," says money-saving expert Andrea Woroch.

Why you need to quit your job ... TODAY

Leon Logothetis from Netflix's "The Kindness Diaries" explains.

PAT KING
@MetroNewYork
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Logothetis on his yellow motorcycle. SW PUBLIC RELATIONS

We all have a laundry list of things we'd much rather do than toil away to pay the rent. Unfortunately, rent ain't cheap, and perks like food and heating aren't free, either. But with the holidays right around the corner, it's a good time to take stock of what we have, and what we could potentially be doing for others.

That inclination inspired author and TV personality Leon Logothetis to hand in his notice, jump on a motorcycle and film "The Kindness Diaries," which aired on Netflix and has just been picked up for another season in 2018. Logothetis spent years as a successful stockbroker in London only to find money didn't bring him happiness.

After seeing the film adaptation of "The Motorcycle Diaries," about the travels of a young Che Guevara, Logothetis decided to quit his job and hit the road. "It was really a tipping point," he shares, and "it pushed me over the edge … in a good way."

His plan was to plot a road trip across America — living on $5 a day and relying on the kindness of strangers along the way. The trip was everything he could have hoped for, but however large the initial stack of fivers was, it eventually ran out. So he went on to work as a television producer in Hollywood. After a few years, he noticed himself falling back into the same habits as his broker days, and needed to break free once again.

"I was walking down the street near Hollywood Boulevard," he remembers, "and I saw this homeless chap who had a sign that said 'Kindness is the best medicine.' There was something about that sign that just touched me in a profound way."

He quit this job (again), bought a vintage yellow motorcycle with a passenger car, and set back out on the road — this time with the mission to help others. He made it a point that for every act of kindness received, he would return the favor by giving that unsuspecting stranger a life-changing gift. While in Pittsburgh, a homeless man helped Logothetis find shelter and food for the night; in exchange, Logothetis offered to send the man to culinary school and set him up in an apartment.

"I call them 'gifts,' but really they're opportunities," he says. "I gave him an opportunity, and it's up to him what he does with that opportunity."

After writing a book about his experiences, he was approached by Netflix with the idea of turning 'The Kindness Diaries' into a show. The show was a hit, and Logothetis and his crew are preparing to start filming season two this January.

So what if you don't have the necessary means to make the same radical change? According to him, the answer is simple: "Ultimately, what defines us is how we show up in the world, and how we choose to treat ourselves, and how we treat each other. Does that mean that work isn't important? Of course not! But if all we do is work, and we don't help other people, then we're living a hollow life. Go out and make as much money as you can. But at the same time, change as many lives as you can by simply being kind."

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Solving the hunger problem in our schools

Because no child should go hungry this holiday season.

PAT KING
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While many of us will be enjoying some sort of delicious spread this holiday season, we should never forget that many families struggle to put food on the table every day of the year. It's a harsh reality, and the effects of this economic divide can be closely seen with how children from these families are performing in schools. This year's Scholastic Teachers and Principals School Report came to the startling conclusion that "71 percent of New York state teachers report having students in their classrooms who are coming to school hungry" and have been reporting similar statistics across the country.

Furthermore, Orgul Ozturk, an economist at the University of South Carolina (with help from her colleagues, Chad Cotti, and John Gordanier) found that the effects of malnourishment for these children can put them in severe disadvantages. In an interview with NPR back in September, she explained that children who come from families that are stuck waiting on their monthly food stamps to refill are less likely to perform well on important exams.

On top of these horrifying statistics, Scholastic had also found that 90 percent of teachers have noticed that their children arrive at school suffering some sort of personal crisis. These issues at home can lead to missing meals and result in distractions at school. "You have so many families with children that are coming to school and their parents may be divorced or separated or they may be living with a different family member," says Michael Haggen, the chief academic officer at Scholastic, "there are so many things that they have to deal with and then come to school, it affects how they are receiving information."

Many schools are taking on this problem by offering free or reduced-cost breakfast and lunch programs. But while this is a step in the right direction, Haggen believes that schools should be doing more to help. Since some children come to school hungry from the night before, Haggen thinks that schools should offer three or four meals a day in order to make sure these children get the right amount of food every day no matter what their situation is like at home.

But how can faculty spot children who may not be getting enough food before and after school? Scholastic is now offering a program called "Learning Support" to help teachers and administration pick up on all of the warning signs that their students are struggling in class due to hunger. "Oftentimes teachers may not be aware of what their students are facing when they come to them. So their assumptions can be something else," explains Haggen. "What we do at Scholastic with 'Learning Support' is we teach them what to look for and what those signs are, then how do we work with agencies to support them."

If you are looking to help out struggling families in your community this holiday season, there are many organizations like City Meals on Wheels that are making a difference. Give back by donating or volunteering your time.

Jets fall apart in fourth again

Gang Green saw another fourth-quarter lead vanish after a disastrous final 14 minutes.

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Once again, a fourth-quarter collapse led to another New York Jets loss on Sunday.

The Jets (4-7) saw a fumble returned for a touchdown and a score off a punt return go against them after taking a 20-18 lead a minute into the fourth quarter in what became a 35-27 loss to the Carolina Panthers in Week 12 at MetLife Stadium.

It spoiled one of Josh McCown's and Robby Anderson's finest performances in a Jets uniform. McCown passed for 307 yards and three touchdowns while Anderson recorded 146 receiving yards on six catches with a pair of scores against a Panthers team (8-3), which has now won four-straight games.

A sleepy affair finally had some kind of offensive life injected into it early in the second quarter when the Panthers reeled off an eight-play, 86-yard drive that ended with a Cam Newton one-yard rushing touchdown to give the visitors to break a 3-3 tie.

Jets rookie safety Jamal Adams tried to provide his team with a spark of their own after the touchdown as he tried to disturb Newton's end zone celebration.

Newton passed for 168 yards and provided another 28 on the ground in Week 12.

Panthers QB Cam Newton celebrates his second-quarter score. GETTY IMAGES

The jawing seemed to work as Carolina's offense sputtered through the rest of the first half, allowing the Jets to get back into it.

For the fifth-straight game, McCown hooked up with Anderson for the first time on Sunday, a 33-yard strike, to make it a 12-10 game with 1:12 to go before the break.

They got together again for a 54-yard score with 5:41 to go in the third quarter to put the Jets in the lead and give Anderson his seventh touchdown catch of the year.

With McCown avoiding pressure by rolling out to his right, he directed Anderson to head straight down the sideline before bombing a dime to the wide-open receiver.

The Panthers immediately responded after Anderson's second touchdown catch of the day, re-taking the lead on their ensuing drive. Jonathan Stewart's two-yard score gave Carolina a one-point lead that would stay that slim after a failed two-point conversion.

New York looked slated to regain a somewhat comfortable advantage of at least six after a long Jermaine Kearse reception and two Carolina pass interference penalties put the Jets on the one-yard-line.

But an Austin Seferian-Jenkins touchdown catch was overturned by a review after he bobbled the ball while falling out of bounds while two other passes fell incomplete.

It was a puzzling series of play calls considering the Jets didn't run the ball once, forcing them to settle for the field goal that put them ahead 20-18 with 14:01 left in the game.

Two minutes later though, the Jets were behind once again and it was the offense to blame. McCown lost the ball while being sacked, presenting linebacker Luke Kuechly with an easy opportunity for the scoop and 34-yard score.

It looked like it was all over with 9:54 to go after Kaelin Clay took a Jets punt 60 yards for a backbreaking touchdown to give Carolina a 12-point lead, but New York pulled within five after McCown and Kearse got together for a three-yard score to make it interesting.

They couldn't stop Newton though as the Panthers' offense managed to run out the clock and put the game out of reach with a field goal with 21 seconds remaining.

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Vesey's big day lifts Rangers

The Rangers managed to pull out a shootout victory over the Canucks despite never leading the game.

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Jimmy Vesey was the hero on Sunday afternoon for the Rangers. GETTY IMAGES

Jimmy Vesey ensured the good times kept going for the New York Rangers, scoring the game-tying goal in regulation and the game-winning tally in a seven-round shootout against the Vancouver Canucks in a 4-3 victory on Sunday.

The Rangers have now won four-straight games and upped their home winning streak to eight games despite never leading on Sunday.

A subpar start left the red-hot Rangers goalie Henrik Lundqvist out to dry. Less than eight minutes into the game, Vancouver was leading after Loui Eriksson fired a wrister under Lundqvist for his third goal in the last four games.

The lackadaisical start continued throughout the period as the Rangers could only muster four shots in the first period.

The Canucks doubled their lead with 7:21 gone in the second when Jake Virtanen meandered from the right boards and snapped a wrister over the glove of Lundqvist.

New York finally got something going with 2:20 left in the second thanks to some lucky bounces.

A wrister from the point by Nick Holden deflected off a Vancouver stick and fell right to the path of Jesper Fast, who lifted the bouncing puck past Jacob Markstrom.

Then came the helter-skelter third period.

Michael Grabner wasted no time tying things up in the third period — just 19 seconds to be exact — when he streaked into the zone thanks to a perfectly weighted pass off the boards by Mats Zuccarello and placed his wrist shot into the top-right corner of the goal.

The problem was that the Rangers defense did nothing to keep things knotted up as Sam Gagner gave the Canucks the lead just 41 seconds after Grabner's goal.

Rick Nash and Vesey bailed the defense out 3:07 later. The veteran Nash sent a spinning pass to the young Vesey as they rushed the Vancouver goal as he deked to his backhand and beat Markstrom up high to force overtime.

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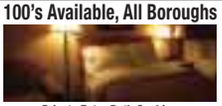
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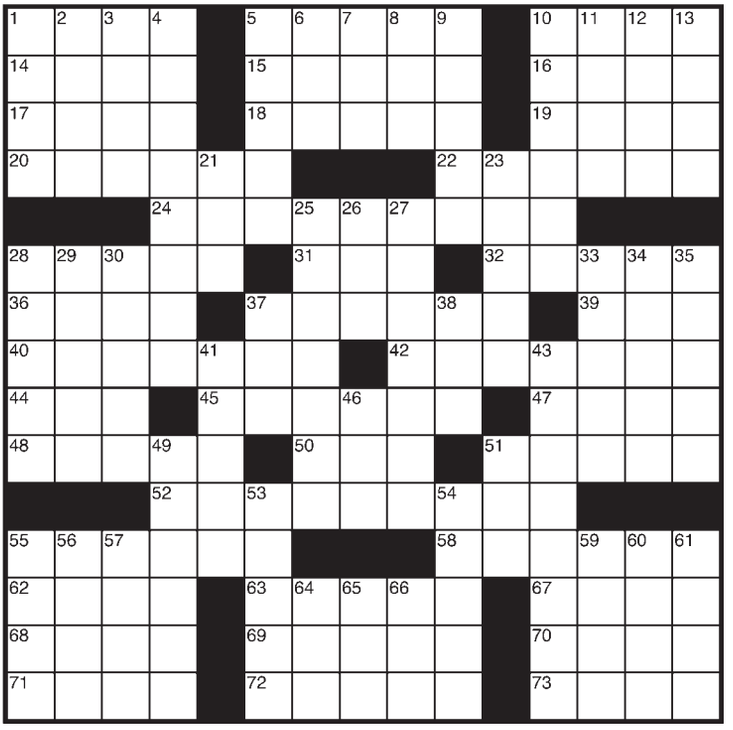
Across

1 Alert
5 Leathery
10 Sleeve part
14 Pointed arch
15 Kashmir cash
16 Peace Prize city
17 Sp. or Ger.
18 "I don't mind -- --"
19 Spinks of the ring
20 Romp about
22 Sidestepped
24 Raised to a lofty position
28 Partner of alas
31 -- Wiedersehen
32 Oven shelves
36 Attic
37 "Instant" house
39 Disdainful snort
40 Crowed over
42 Nylons
44 -- Nimitz
45 Critter
47 Sit-down occasion
48 Taxi ticker
50 Years on end
51 Fuel-gauge reading
52 Paris landmark (2 wds.)
55 Shortage
58 Leap over
62 Movie lioness
63 Suffuse
67 Go yachting
68 Show approval
69 Persona non --
70 Ms. James of jazz
71 Where Canterbury is
72 Rented, as a limo
73 Caught red-handed

Down

1 Dog's ancestor
2 Seaweed extract
3 Town near Lake Tahoe
4 Lets slide
5 Stretch of land
6 Umpire's yell
7 Work -- -- sweat
8 Hair goo
9 Most beautiful woman
10 Pina --
11 Pre-owned
12 Freighter hazard
13 Cherished
21 Printer fluid
23 Is and was
25 More robust
26 Strong-scented plant
27 Casual
28 Book for photos
29 Unfastened
30 Make -- -- buck
33 Bird sound
34 K, to a jeweler
35 Bashfully
37 Not a pencil
38 Email provider
41 Mystical card
43 Dunks
46 Stooge with bangs
49 Starry-eyed
51 Low-fat meat
53 Chicken piece
54 In the lead
55 Patio cousin
56 She, to Marie
57 Cold -- -- icicle
59 See regularly
60 Diet
61 High spirits
64 CAT scan relative
65 Tavern
66 Sporty truck



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easy

			2		7			3
5		6	3					
9		2		8				
	4		9	3	1		8	
		3		4		1		
	1		8	7	6		4	
				6		8		9
					9	6		4
6			4		8			

hard

4		6				2		3
			4					
2			3	8				7
		2		3	1		5	
6	3						2	8
	9		8	2		3		
1				7	3			6
					8			
7		5				4		2

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries Keep your personal life a secret. Sharing information with the wrong person or using your password or bank cards liberally will lead to loss.

Taurus Use your imagination to find solutions when dealing with partners and superiors. Knowing where you stand will help you make the right decision.

Gemini Truth is better than fiction. You can use your imagination, but don't let your words hurt someone or be subject to ridicule. Fair and intelligent assessment is encouraged.

Cancer If you offer a little extra, you will stand out. Your creativity when finding solutions and ways to improve old methods will encourage you to do more.

Leo You'll have great ideas and wisdom to share, but choose your collaborators carefully. Emotional manipulation will be used to take something that belongs to you.

Virgo Don't be fooled by what others do or say. Someone will use emotional blackmail to try to get you to do something that is not your responsibility.

Libra Step up and make a decision. Put your qualifications to the test and give your all to bring about positive change. Learn from the past and jump into action.

Scorpio Take on a new project. Enjoy creative endeavors and do things with youngsters or a loved one that will bring you closer together. Self-improvements are highlighted.

Sagittarius Don't share personal information. Be cautious about who you trust and what you offer. You'll be taken advantage of if you cannot say no to an unreasonable demand.

Capricorn Deal with personal finances and evaluate the way you currently handle your cash. Time spent with youngsters or loved one will lead to an interesting suggestion.

Aquarius Use your sense of right and wrong when dealing with people who want to entice you into doing something you probably shouldn't do.

Pisces You'll be disillusioned by what someone tells you. Look at your personal affairs to discover an opportunity that will benefit you physically or emotionally. EUGENIA LAST

Yesterday's answers

S	W	A	N			D	A	L	I		T	W	I	N
H	A	L	O	S		E	R	A	T		O	R	C	A
A	D	M	I	T		F	I	C	A		M	E	I	N
D	I	S	R	O	B	E	D		L	E	S	S	E	N
				C	A	R		W	I	N		T	R	Y
A	L	A	S	K	A		T	O	A	D	S			
C	U	S	H	Y		I	R	O	N	S	I	D	E	
E	A	S	E		V	O	I	D	S		T	U	E	S
	U	N	E	V	E	N	L	Y		L	A	D	L	E
			P	E	R	I	L		P	U	R	E	S	T
E	T	A		E	S	C		M	I	R				
P	A	P	Y	R	I		Y	O	G	I	B	E	A	R
O	B	I	E		O	P	E	N		N	E	R	V	E
C	O	N	N		N	I	L	E		G	A	M	E	S
H	O	G	S		S	E	P	T			T	A	C	T

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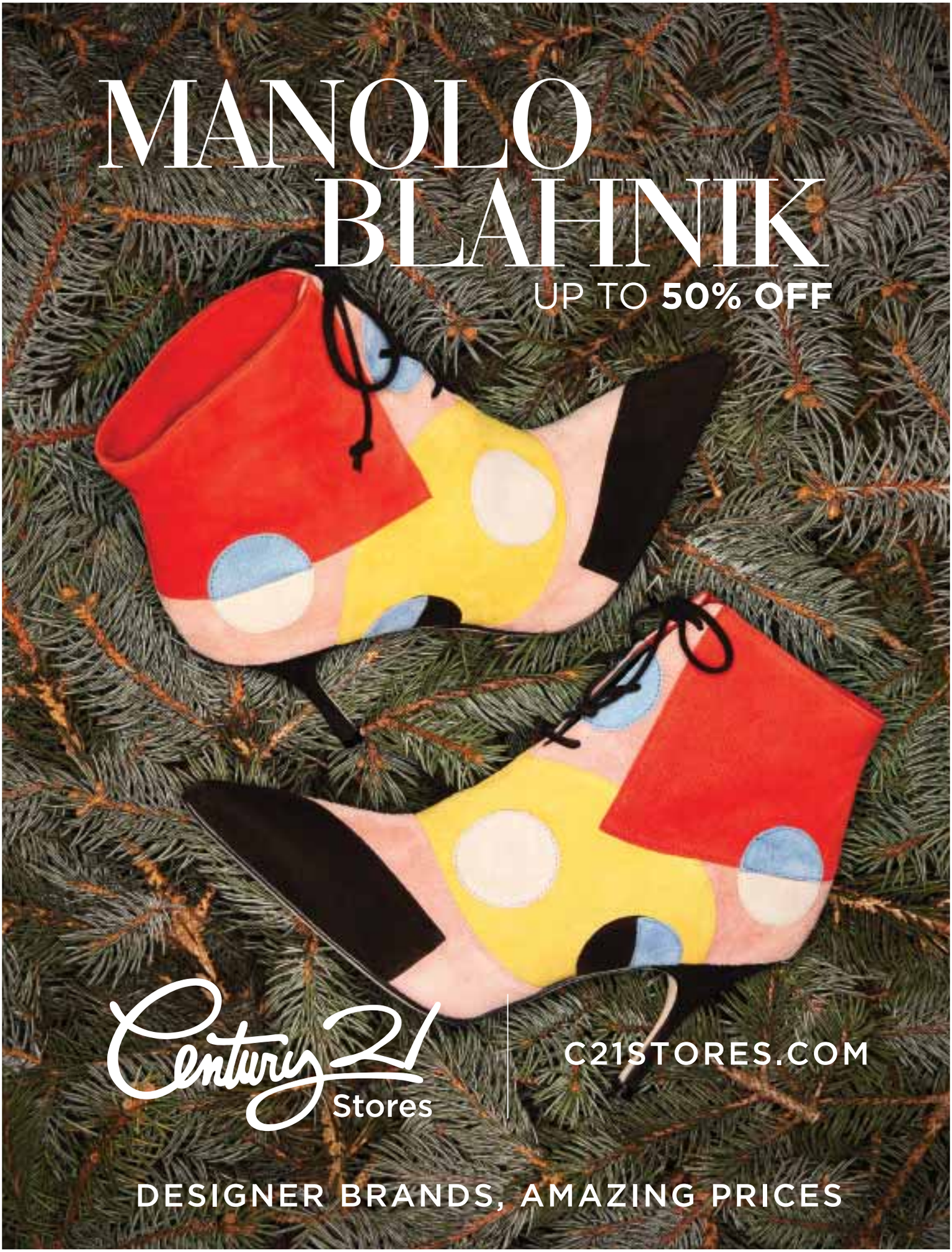
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